

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Adolescent Pregnancy

The adolescent pregnancy rate for Hardeman County has been historically among the highest in the state. There are many causal factors related to teenage pregnancy, including low self-esteem, family history of early pregnancy, previous sexual abuse, substance abuse, lack of involvement in community activities, lack of adult supervision, economic factors, lack of knowledge about reproductive health, as well as issues surrounding male involvement and responsibility.

Community Survey Results indicated that 87 percent of respondents believe adolescent pregnancy is a "Very Serious" community health problem. Similar results were found from the Behavioral Risk Factor Survey conducted by the University of Tennessee.

Child Abuse/Neglect

Healthy outcomes for our children can only be achieved through a proactive strategy that focuses on environmental conditions and social development. Lack of effective parenting skills and limited opportunities for children are environmental conditions that have a negative impact on the social development of children. Available resources in the community are

inadequate to meet the needs identified. Parenting resources and opportunities for youth are extremely limited. Data reflecting risk factors for adolescent problem behaviors were carefully reviewed. The rate of children in state custody in Hardeman County is 10.5 per 1,000 children. The rate for the State of Tennessee is 9.0. The percent of children referred to Juvenile Court is 7.1 percent in Hardeman County as compared to 5.1 percent for the state. The rate of children in state care is also higher for Hardeman County than for the state. Promotion rates for children in Hardeman County have consistently been below the state rates since the 92-93 school year. The dropout rate for Hardeman County has increased since the 94-95 school year.

Promotion Rates K-8

Hardeman County and Tennessee

	92-93	93-94	94-95	95-96
Hardeman	93.7	94.0	94.5	91.9
Tennessee	96.1	96.1	96.5	96.6

Dropout Rates 9-12

	92-93	93-94	94-95	95-96
Hardeman	4.6	3.0	5.8	5.5
Tennessee	4.8	4.7	4.8	4.5